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CEREBUS WORLD TOUR

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(see back cover for details)

CEREBUS mothers & daughters 42

192
MAR

CEREBUS
NO. 192 MARCH 1995

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MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS
a novel

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(Cerebus 151 to Cerebus 162)
Flight

•

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MONTHLY

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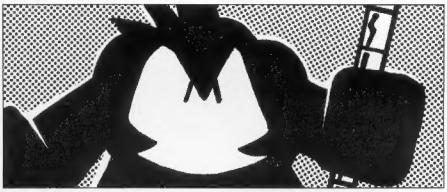
THE BIG



In addition to being the creative genius behind Tales of the Beanworld, *Larry Marder is also the Executive Director of Image Comics, the third largest comics publishers in North America. News of the Marvel Comics acquisition of Heroes World Distributing swept through the direct market in late December and early January. Since a meeting of the International Association of Direct Distributors (IADD) had been scheduled for the third week of January (an annual get-together of the executives and senior staff of direct-market distributors supplying comic-book stores, where executives of comic-book companies put forward their publishing and promotion plans for the coming year — in addition to addressing distribution concerns with their operations), the stage was set for the first face-to-face meeting between those who would be most affected by the implications of the acquisition. Rumours abounded that Diamond, the largest distributor, intended to boycott the meeting, questions were raised as to whether Ivan Snyder (president of Heroes World) would be barred owing to the conflict of interest represented by the sale of his company to Marvel Comics, other rumours circulated about other distribution companies being sold, exclusive distribution deals being worked on behind the scenes between the larger players.*

It was against this backdrop that Larry Marder addressed the gathering on the morning of Monday January 23rd. While I might take issue with the concept of the Image partners being self-publishers (at least insofar as I conceive of the term), in reviewing Larry's first draught of his speech I thought he had, in characteristic fashion, neatly encapsulated the underpinnings of the conflict of which the Heroes World acquisition is merely the very small tip of a large philosophical iceberg. I requested his permission to reprint the address in its entirety and he agreed.

As I said to the Comics Buyers' Guide *when they solicited my comments for the first large article on the issue, I think that the Heroes World acquisition represents the starting gun in a bloody battle for supremacy in the teen-age, super-hero market, which might very well see the swift demise of a number of large players. But, I added, I also think that it presents a remarkable window of opportunity for dedicated and aggressive self-publishers to make their mark in the marketplace where the long-standing and knee-jerk loyalty to Marvel Comics among both distributors and retailers has been dealt a (perhaps) crippling blow.*

And now, without further ado, the Executive Director of Image Comics, the Nexus of All Comic-Book Realities, our very own Five-Star Phenomenon, Ol' Blood and Guts Marder:

PICTURE (EXTRA)

LARRY MARDER

ADDRESS TO IADD

JANUARY 23, 1995

There isn't a soul in this room whose goal isn't to expand consumer awareness of the comic-book art form. The economic changes in the publishing, distribution and retail links of the comic-book food chain have been so radical that I think we can safely say that we are living through a paradigm shift. *Our business seems to be experiencing permanent changes.* In retrospect, I think it is fair to say, as an industry we were unprepared for the incredible changes that have occurred in the last 36 months, but so far we've all done the best we can rolling with the punches. More on that in a moment.

But first I want to talk about comic books. Not toys. Not cards. Not pogs. Comic books. Y'know, those brightly colored paper things that all our empires were built upon? They are in trouble and we all know it.

What exactly is in trouble? Not the art form. The simple unassailable, indisputable truth is that there will always be people who create comics and there will always be people who will enjoy reading them. There has been a steady supply-and-demand for comics since they were perfected almost a century ago. But the way they are published and distributed — ahh, that is always subject to change. No, the art form isn't in trouble. What's in trouble is the *business* that erected itself around the distribution of super-hero genre comics.

At Image, for the last three years, we've tried to offer comics fans the best no-nonsense super-hero comics we can create. Let me be the first to admit that our business practices have sometimes been a bit rough. They had to be. We started out operating in a vacuum. We were artists, not MBAs. We didn't know diddly about trade terms and ad rebates and business practice discounts and the like, so we didn't offer much assistance in that sophisticated economic arena. Instead, Image Comics practiced business in a simple, unsophisticated, straightforward way that drove everyone bonkers.

Image offered: No frills. No co-op. No ad rebates. No Business Practice Discounts. *Just the best comics we could produce at prices we hoped were appropriate.* Simple. All the *other* nonsense — all the smoke-and-mirrors business you conducted with Image's more *sophisticated* competitors — where has it led you? To one of *our* competitors devouring one of *your* competitors, *both* of whom claim that the status quo will be maintained — for now. Do you believe them?

Everyone in the business seems to have been caught off-guard by Marvel Entertainment Group's recent acquisition of Heroes World Distribution. Marvel is following Teddy Roosevelt's dictum of "Walk softly but carry a big stick." It is practicing gunboat diplomacy. The big Marvel battleship has steamed into the harbor and I guess that we, the ignorant savages, are supposed to be *so* intimidated by its awesome display of power that we're supposed to run for the hills and *immediately* surrender the comic-book business to it once and forever.

And some folks do seem to be that completely rattled. On that day when the phone rang and the faxes hummed and everyone found out what was up — Marvel *was* in the driver's seat. *Hey, back-stabbers always are.* All of a sudden everyone doubted everything and was asking, "What are we supposed to do next? Who will lead us out of this valley of the shadow of death?" As is usual in situations like this, self-proclaimed saviors started turning up everywhere you looked. "Do this. Don't do that. My statistics are true. His statistics are false. We're diversifying. We're consolidating. Sign up here. Disengage there. Listen to us — we're your friend — don't you remember? Blah. Blah. Blah." No one knows what is going on. No one knows anything.

Right now, the comic-book business feels like a giant video game. Everyone was relatively happy playing at the current level, but now, thanks to Marvel Comics, we've been pushed through to the next level — and before we can get our bearings, we're all required to protect ourselves from an onslaught of possible fatal dangers hurtling at us — *and we don't know if our weapons still work!*

To go back to war analogies, the clever officers that make up Marvel's general staff, a cadre of lawyers, accountants and MBAs, seem to think they've

pulled off an operation as well thought-out and precise as the Allies' invasion of Normandy on D-Day. Well, maybe so. But I think it's more like Pearl Harbor. A swift attack, whereupon they very quickly gained lots of unprotected territories. But in the end, as we all know, the Pearl Harbor folks were absolutely unable to hold anything permanently, and ultimately their empire was destroyed. Why? Because the Allies regrouped and took them on.

Can Image Comics single-handedly destroy the evil empire of the Marvel Entertainment Group? No. Our pockets are too shallow. Our resources are too thin. But we do have one plain and simple advantage working for our side — Marvel has made an *unbelievable* tactical error by basing all of its decisions on an assumption that we reject.

That assumption is that Marvel's stable of characters is inherently superior to everyone else's. Which, of course, was DC's unbelievable tactical error in the late '60s and early '70s.

Those of us who create and distribute quality super-hero comics — what exactly do we sell? Fantasy fulfillment for male adolescent rage. Satisfying the demands of male adolescent rage through fantasy fulfillment has been the key to success in the super-hero comic-book business since the early '60s. And it is comics' inability to satisfy male adolescent rage as superbly as the newer electronic media satisfy it that is in *part* at the root of the current erosion of the comic-book customer base.

Marvel's current distress over its recent general slide in the areas of business and market share *was not* caused by too level a playing field or by catalogs that are too cluttered or whatever mumbo jumbo Marvel has rationalized as the source of its general decline over the last three years.

There has never been *anything* wrong with the service Marvel received beyond the fact that everyone *else* gets a fair shake, *even the littlest guy gets a chance to be seen.*

But if you are Marvel that is a bad thing, because they want you, and everyone else, to think that Marvel's competitors are illegitimate, bastard-child impostors. Clearly one of their corporate goals is to foster the belief that comic books equals Marvel Comic books. This idea is insane. It will never, ever work. They may, however, completely derail *everything* everyone in this room has *ever* worked for before they figure out that they didn't really know *what* they are really doing.

Let's face it, the people who now own and operate Marvel are not good guys who love Spider-Man and the Hulk. They are predators who see the exploitation of those characters as a way to capture a big pile of cash. You and I are impediments towards their ability to capture that cash.

We know why they want to dismember us. No one understands Marvel Comics better than we do. *After all, we are rebel Marvel heretics.* Our heresy is that you should be allowed to own that which you create.

At almost every juncture Image Comics has been met with scepticism. *But we are still here.* Alone and alive. Our characters, when all is said and done, are *still* in *our* hands. The creators of those characters are still in *complete* control of their destiny. It is an amazing accomplishment and we're proud as hell of it. It's true that our pockets are not deep. It's true that we don't have a sophisticated marketing machine. We don't have almost *anything* that they have. Just the knowledge that they are not invulnerable. We have *some* weapons in our arsenal — guerrilla weapons, to be sure — but weapons nonetheless. We know that all the blockbuster, record-breaking comics they have published in the near past were drawn by *us.* We know that many, many of their most popular action-figure toys are based on cool super-hero costumes that *we* designed.

But, then again, this is what the current crisis is all about. *They know those things too.* They were unable to conquer us in a game of fair play. They want to street fight now. Okay. C'mon. Let's go.

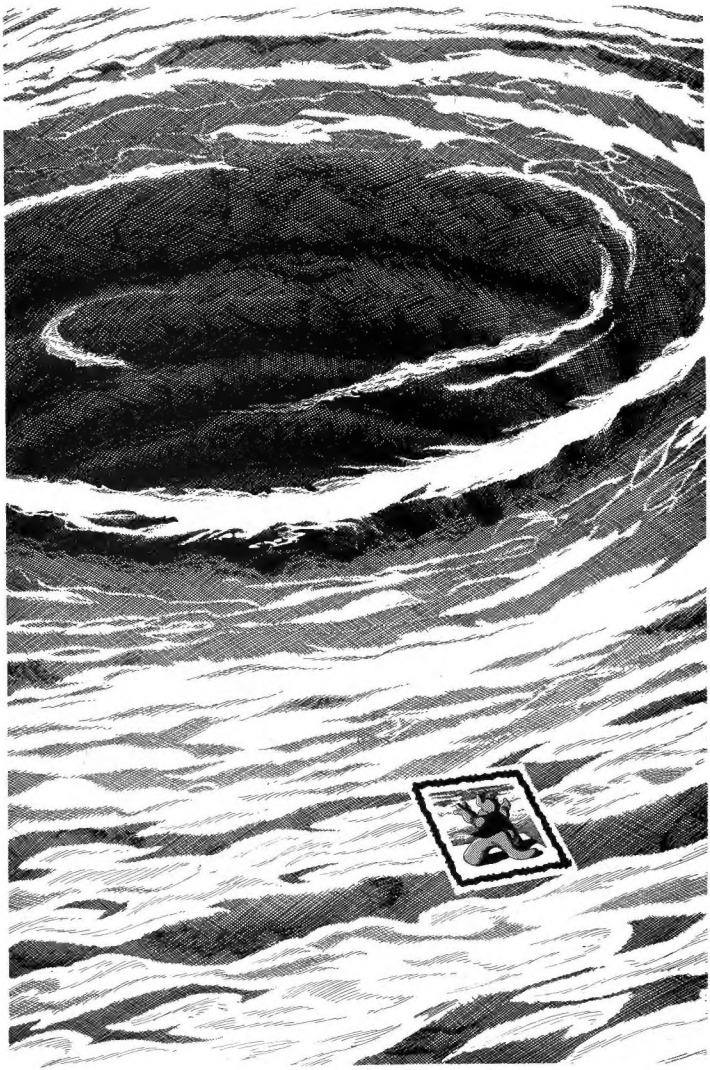
Image fully intends to live by the credo that our enemy's enemy is our friend. Let's recognize that the status quo may be impossible to maintain. If Image or any other publisher does something that seems unfair, remember that we are fighting for our survival just like you. If Marvel Comics does what we all anticipate them to do and self-distribute their products, then all the other members of the comic-book industry will have to formulate some sort of response — *not because we want to, but because we have to.*

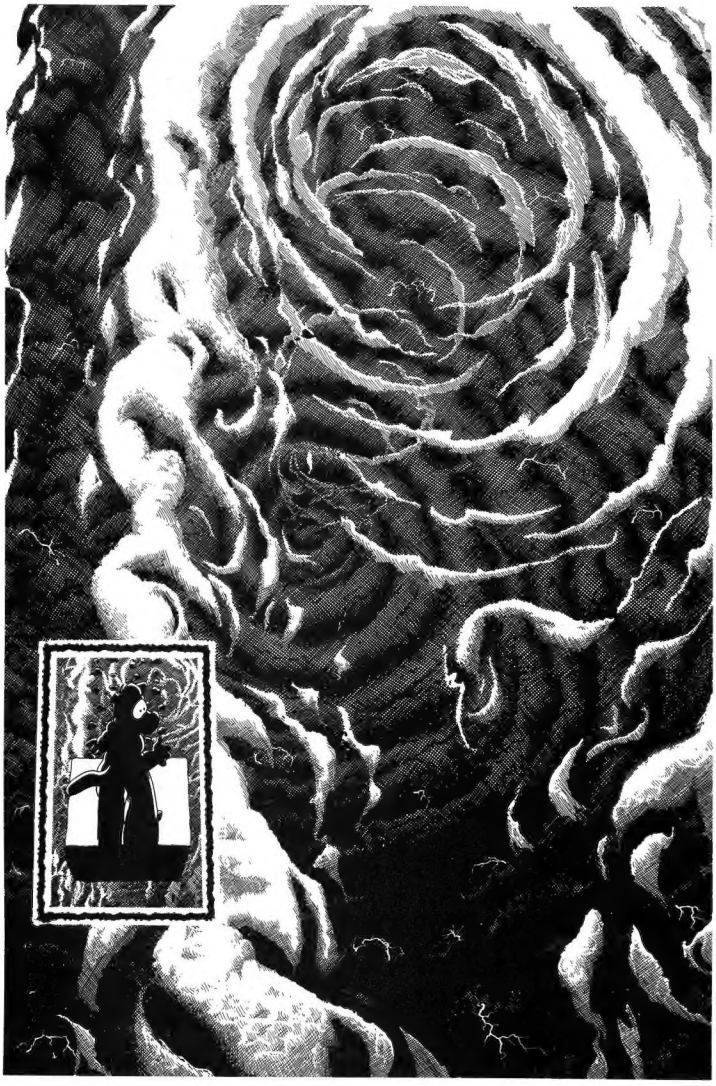
Last year, when I stood before this respected body, I stated the following, and I quote, "Increasingly I feel like we're at the end of the process set in motion by Phil Seuling and Sol Harrison all those years ago. This is not a time to yearn for the good old days, to want to get back to basics. There are no basics. Basics wore out a few years ago." *Well, I sure look like a psychic now, huh?*

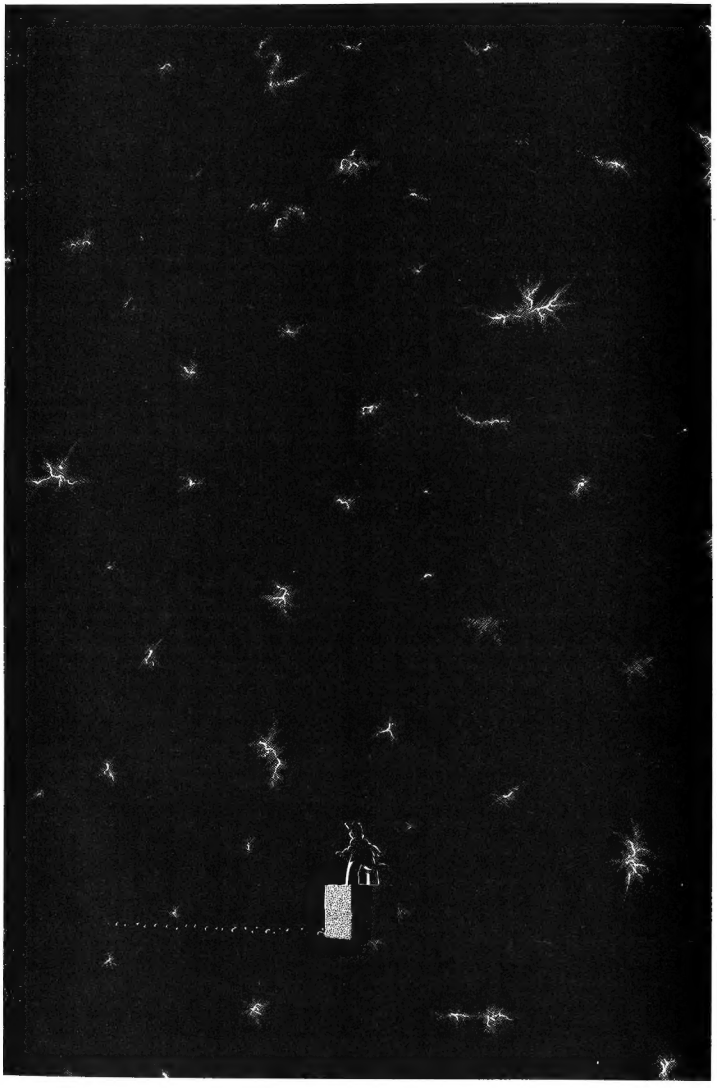
This is a time for folks with guts, brains and a sense of vision. The coming opportunities for our company in the fields of licensing and merchandising, the new electronic media, interactive media, virtual reality, TV and major motion pictures are extraordinary. There are unbelievable opportunities out there for creative minds. We'll escape into the information highway if we have to. Marvel can't hold us back. Hinder us, yes. But stop us forever? *No way. No how.* The immediate war is going to have the same goals as always — rack space, unit sales and market share. Only the rules of engagement have changed.

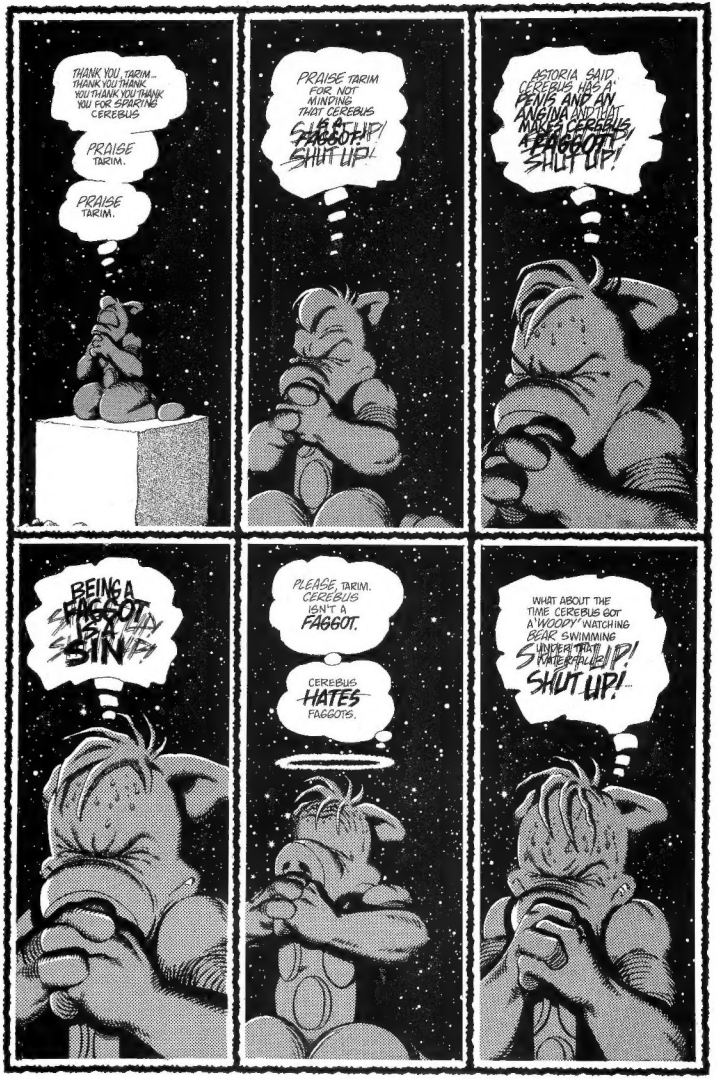
This isn't going to be one of those splendid little showcase wars like the invasion of Grenada or Panama. This war will be won by bloody hand-to-hand combat — *take no prisoners, leave no survivors.* Everyone has to do what everyone has to do in order merely to survive. It will not be pretty.

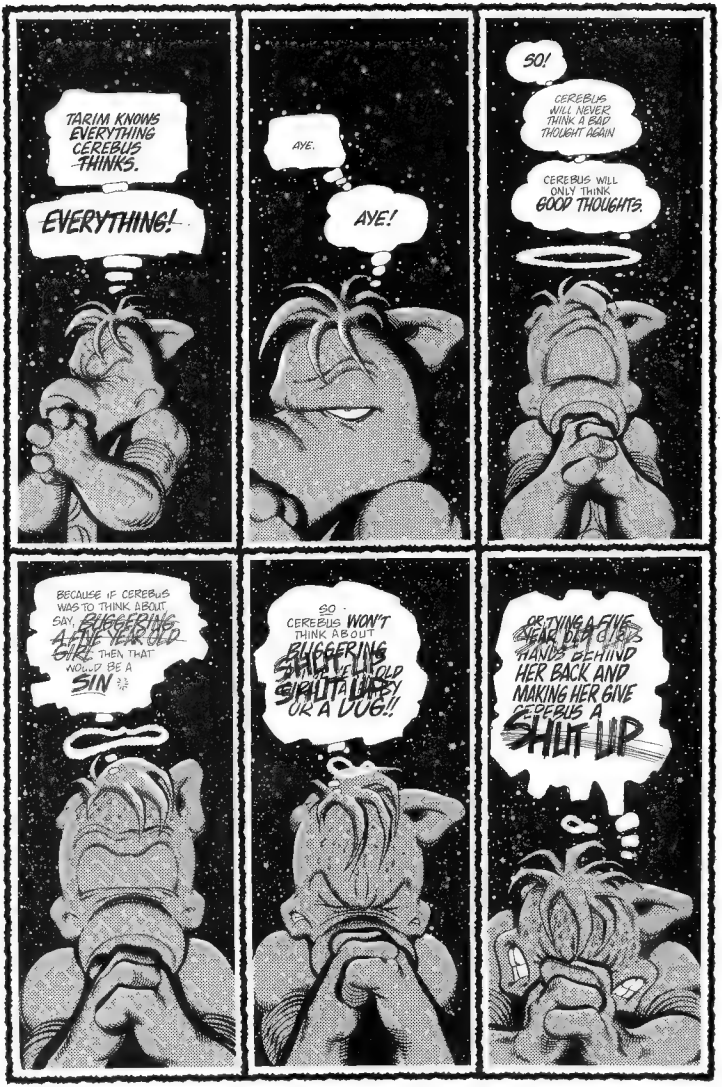
Just remember, as the going gets tough, that whatever happens to any and all of us, Marvel Comics hurled the first bomb and the rest of us are going to do whatever it takes to respond. Some of our responses may not seem fair. What Marvel did was not fair. We are in for an interesting year.

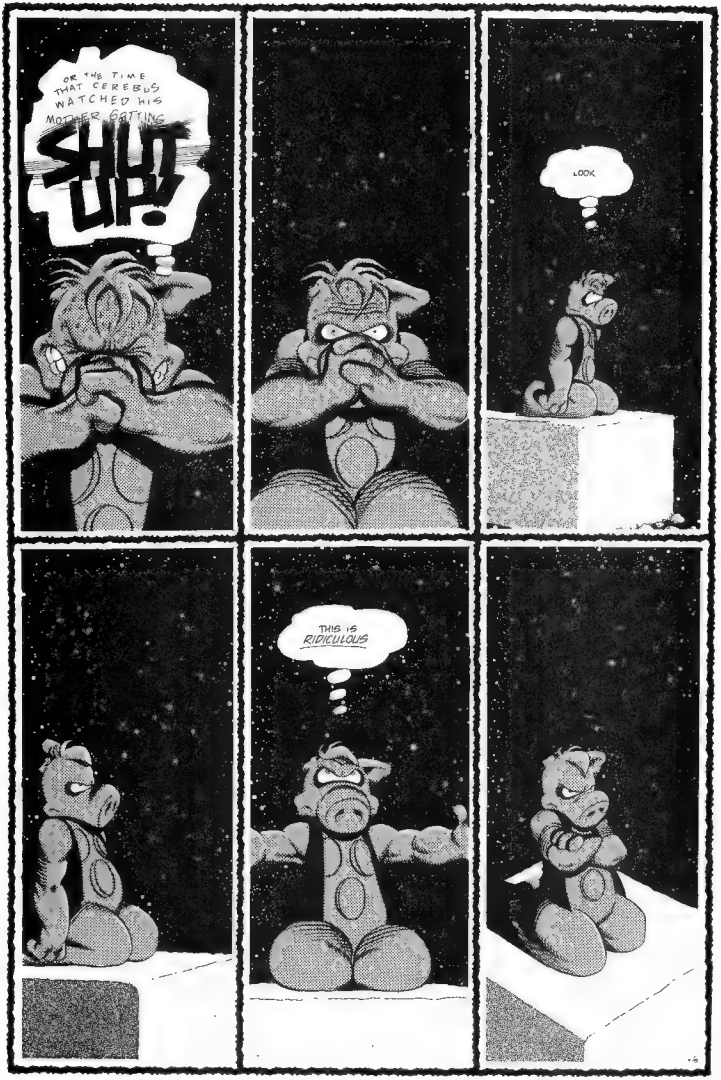


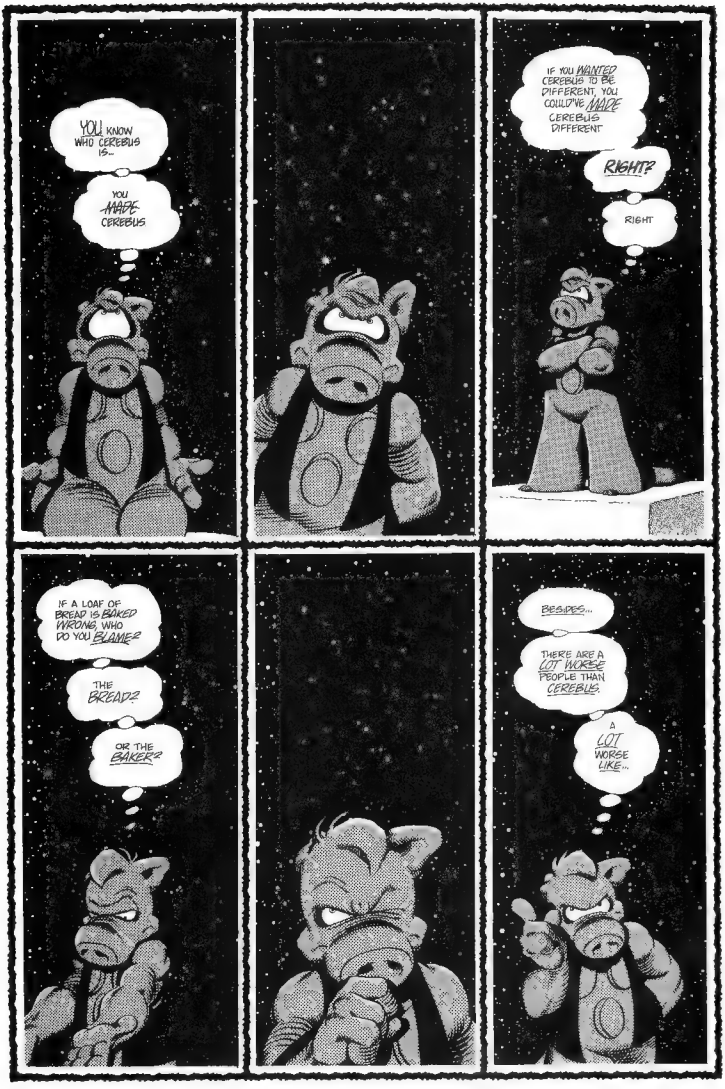




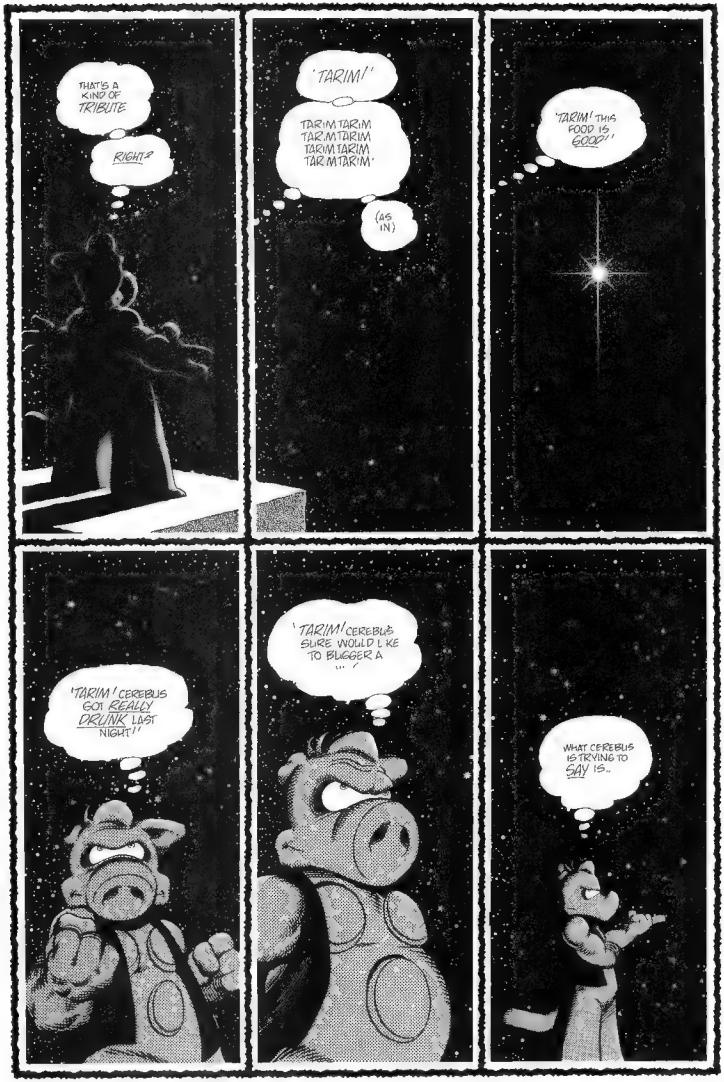

THANK YOU, TARIM... THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU FOR SPARING CEREBUS
PRAISE TARIM.
PRAISE TARIM.
PRAISE TARIM FOR NOT MINDING THAT CEREBUS
SHUT UP!
ASTORIA SAID CEREBUS HAS A PENIS AND AN ANGINA AND THAT MAKES CEREBUS A FAGGOT!
SHUT UP!
BEING A FAGGOT IS A SIN!?
PLEASE, TARIM. CEREBUS ISN'T A FAGGOT.
CEREBUS HATES FAGGOTS.
WHAT ABOUT THE TIME CEREBUS GOT A 'WOODY' WATCHING BEAR SWIMMING
SHUT UP!
SHUT UP!...


TARIM KNOWS EVERYTHING CEREBUS THINKS.
EVERYTHING!
AYE.
AYE!
SO!
CEREBUS WILL NEVER THINK A BAD THOUGHT AGAIN
CEREBUS WILL ONLY THINK GOOD THOUGHTS.
BECAUSE IF CEREBUS WAS TO THINK ABOUT SAY, BUGGERING A FIVE YEAR OLD GIRL THEN THAT WOULD BE A SIN
SO CEREBUS WON'T THINK ABOUT BUGGERING A FIVE YEAR OLD GIRL OR A DOG!!
OR TYING A FIVE YEAR OLD GIRL'S HANDS BEHIND HER BACK AND MAKING HER GIVE CEREBUS A SHUT UP

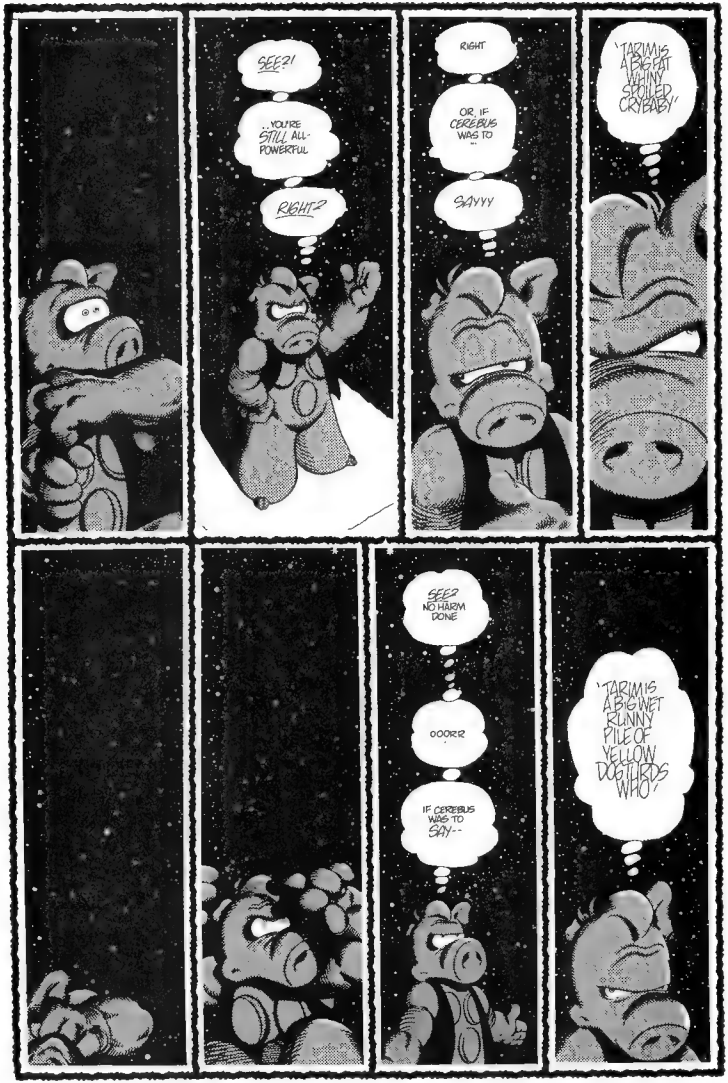

OR THE TIME THAT CERBERUS WATCHED HIS MOTHER EATING
SHUT UP!
LOOK
THIS IS RIDICULOUS

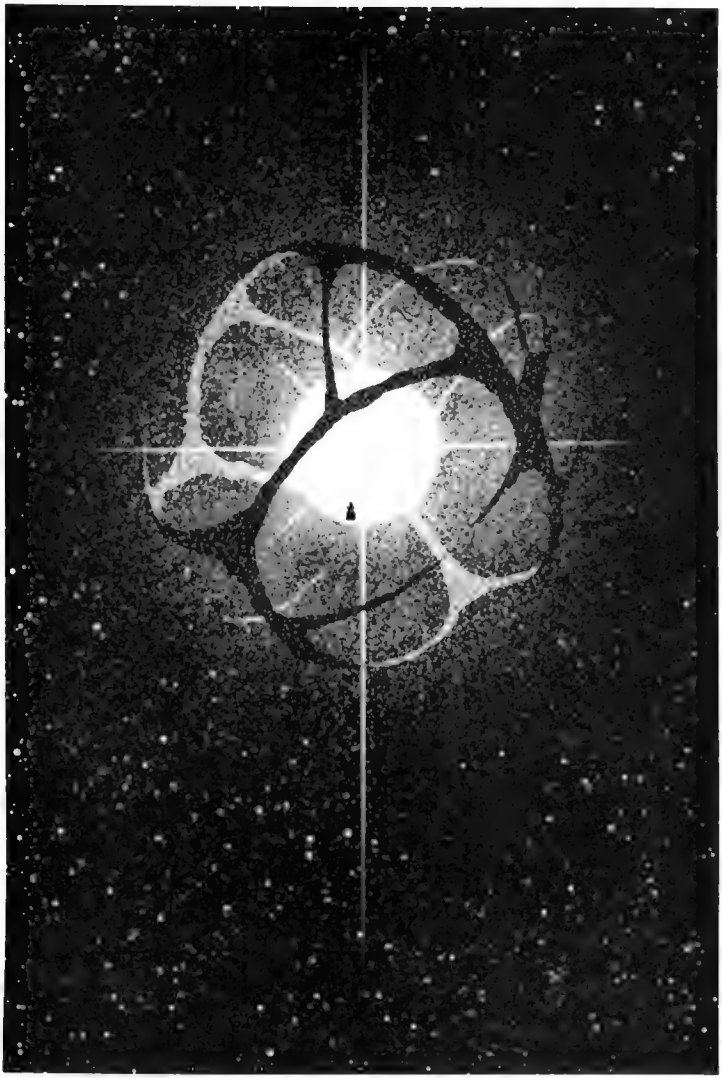

YOU know who CEREBUS is...
you MADE CEREBUS
IF you WANTED CEREBUS to be DIFFERENT, you COULDVE MADE CEREBUS DIFFERENT
RIGHT?
RIGHT
IF A LOAF OF BREAD IS BAKED WRONG, WHO DO YOU BLAME?
THE BREAD?
OR THE BAKER?
BESIDES...
THERE ARE A LOT WORSE PEOPLE THAN CEREBUS.
A LOT WORSE LIKE...

Like
OKAY..
CEREBUS CAN'T THINK OF THEIR NAMES JUST THIS MINUTE
BUT!
CEREBUS HASN'T KILLED AS MANY PEOPLE AS SOME PEOPLE HAVE..
AND CEREBUS DOESN'T SHIT FUCK CUNT SWEAR AS MUCH AS SOME PEOPLE DO..
OH SURE
CEREBUS TAKES YOUR NAME IN VAIN.
BUT! IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT ...


THAT'S A KIND OF TRIBUTE
RIGHT?
'TARIM!'
TARIM TARIM TARIM TARIM TARIM TARIM TARIM TARIM'
(AS IN)
'TARIM! THIS FOOD IS GOOD!'
'TARIM! CEREBUS GOT REALLY DRUNK LAST NIGHT!'
'TARIM! CEREBUS SURE WOULD LIKE TO BUGGER A ...'
WHAT CEREBUS IS TRYING TO SAY IS..

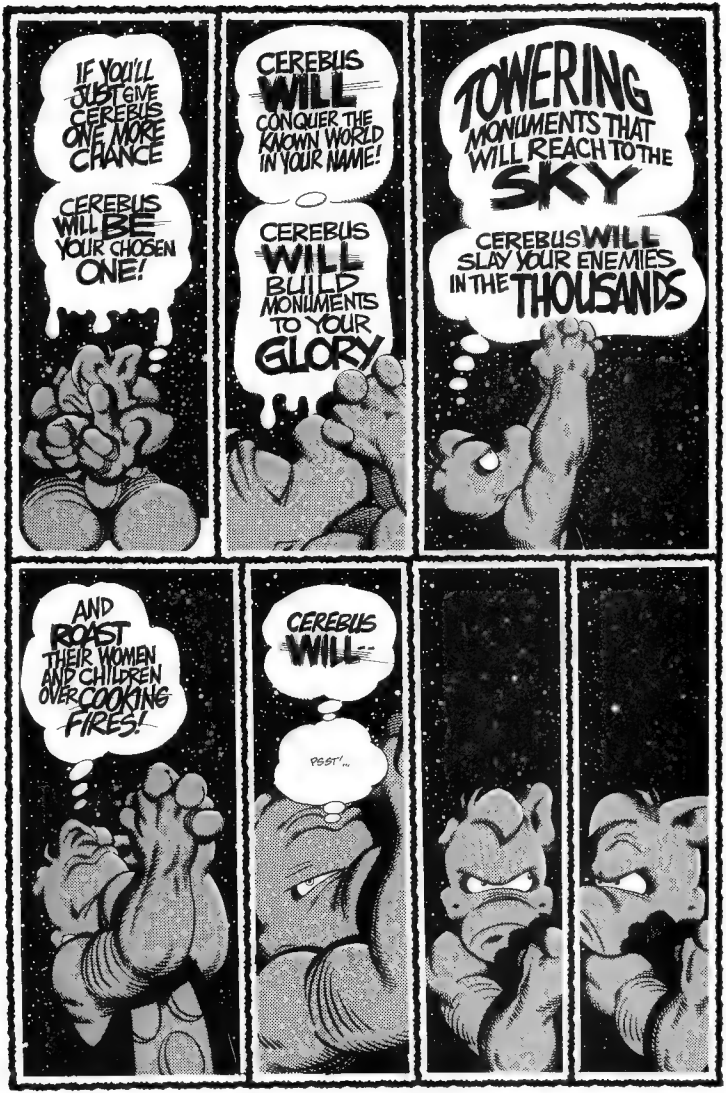
WHAT CEREBUS IS TRYING TO SAY IS--
CEREBUS IS JUST THIS INSIGNIFICANT, POWERLESS, LITTLE FLYSPECK TO YOU, RIGHT?
RIGHT
YOU'RE QUADRAZILLIONS OF TIMES BIGGER THAN CEREBUS! YOU'RE ALL-POWERFUL AND ALL-SEEING! RIGHT?
RIGHT
SO WHAT DO YOU CARE WHAT SOME POWERLESS LITTLE FLYSPECK THINKS OF YOU?
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL IN BEING WORSHIPPED BY FLYSPECKS?
I MEAN, WHAT IF CEREBUS SAYS
"
"TARIM IS A SCARED CAT"

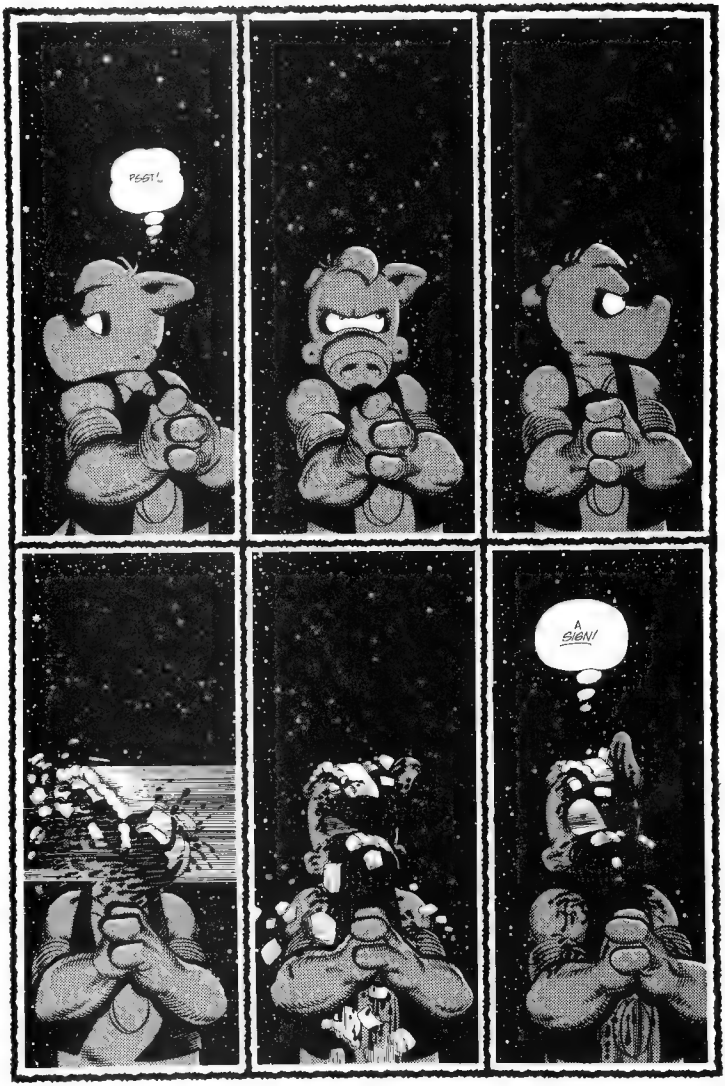

SEE?
...YOU'RE STILL ALL-POWERFUL
RIGHT?
RIGHT
OR, IF CERBERUS WAS TO ...
SAYYY
"JARIM IS A BIG FAT WHINY SPOILED CRYBABY!
SEE? NO HARM DONE
OOOR!
IF CERBERUS WAS TO SAY--
"JARIM IS A BIG WET RUNNY PILE OF YELLOW DOGTURDS WHO'



CEREBUS IS SORRY! CEREBUS DIDN'T MEAN IT!
CEREBUS WILL NEVER DO OR SAY A BAD THING AGAIN
EVER EVER EVER
CEREBUS KNOWS HE SAID THAT BEFORE, BUT THIS TIME CEREBUS MEANS IT!
CEREBUS REALLY DOES.
WHAT CEREBUS MEANS IS THAT CEREBUS MEANS IT WHEN CEREBUS SAYS THAT CEREBUS DIDN'T MEAN IT WHEN CEREBUS SAID WHAT CEREBUS DIDN'T MEAN!
CEREBUS IS A BAD FLYSPECK!

BAD FLYSPECK!
BAD FLYSPECK!
BAD FLYSPECK!
PUNCH
PUNCH
PUNCH
(HE'S BUYING IT! HE'S BUYING IT! LAY IT ON A LITTLE THICKER!)
PLEEASE TARIM!
JUST GIVE CEREBUS ONE ... MORE ... CHANCE
(UNTIL THE NEXT TIME CEREBUS NEEDS ONE MORE CHANCE)
CEREBUS KNOWS HE DOESN'T DESERVE IT...
(BUT LOOK AT HOW PATHETIC CEREBUS IS... BEGGING YOU)
HUNCHED OVER... TREMBLING... PLEADING...
PLEASE
(SNIVELING)
SNIFF


IF YOU'LL JUST GIVE CEREBUS ONE MORE CHANCE
CEREBUS WILL BE YOUR CHOSEN ONE!
CEREBUS WILL CONQUER THE KNOWN WORLD IN YOUR NAME!
CEREBUS WILL BUILD MONUMENTS TO YOUR GLORY
TOWERING MONUMENTS THAT WILL REACH TO THE SKY
CEREBUS WILL SLAY YOUR ENEMIES IN THE THOUSANDS
AND ROAST THEIR WOMEN AND CHILDREN OVER COOKING FIRES!
CEREBUS WILL--
PSST!...

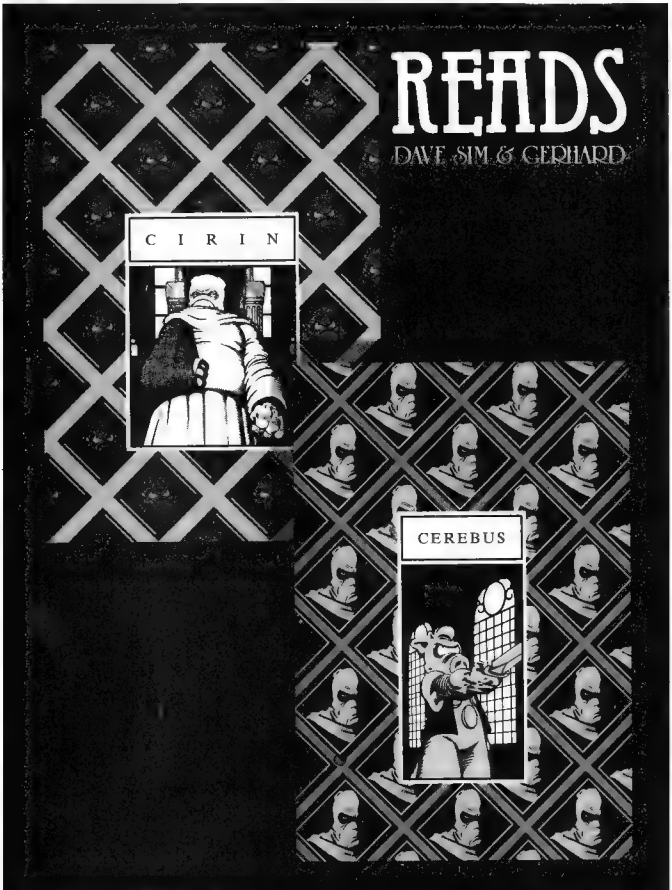

PEGI'L
A SIGN!

READS (Mothers & Daughters Book Three) will be available in a signed and numbered first printing and regular edition from Aardvark-Vanaheim in April, 1995. If you had specified the same number when ordering previous CEREBUS volumes or don't have access to a comic shop willing to order this book, we will be taking advance orders by phone and mail (until April 30 for the signed and numbered edition). Please contact us as soon as possible if you want a specific number. First come, first served.

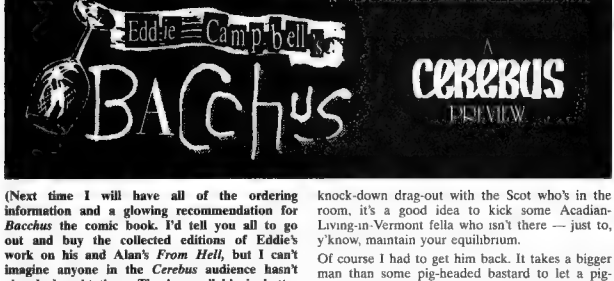
$28.00 ***SIGNED AND NUMBERED EDITION***

PLUS $3.00 POSTAGE & HANDLING
(Canadian customers please add 7% GST)

REGULAR EDITION **$17.00**



PHONE ORDERS (Visa and Mastercard) **519-576-7820** or **519-576-0610 • FAX ORDERS 519-576-0955**
Or send cheque/money order to Aardvark Vanaheim Inc., P.O. Box 1674, Station C, Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4R2
Please include your name, address, daytime phone number, Visa or Mastercard number & expiration date and name on the card



(Next time I will have all of the ordering information and a glowing recommendation for *Bacchus* the comic book. I'd tell you all to go out and buy the collected editions of Eddie's work on his and Alan's *From Hell*, but I can't imagine anyone in the *Cerebus* audience hasn't already bought them. They're available in better comic-book stores everywhere or from Kitchen Sink Press. And for the relatively humourless among you, regarding the following: I'm KIDDING — Eddie Campbell is in a very select group of people whose work I am an absolute fanatic about and *Bacchus* is my favourite Campbell creation. Do yourself a favour and get in on the ground floor on this one.)

Eddie's a gud lad. We're both Scottish, y'see. Sim — it's part of the Fraser clan. Scots look at ye funny when y'say that, but it's true. When we sat down to do the *Cerebus/Bacchus* crossover in Australia (that's where Eddie lives — the wife has family there, which is about the only good explanation for a Scot living in Australia, but I digress), we'd already crossed swords over it at Eddie's house. I wanted to do a Greek myth of some kind and Eddie wasn't keen. Eddie was about as far from keen as you can get and still be this side of homicidal. That's a Scot for you. So Eddie shows me this song sheet he got from an old song book with a song on it. 'The Face on the Barroom Floor.' Eddie thought it would make a gud story. 'The Face on the Barroom Floor,' he'd say reverently, his eyes half-lidded, as he poured himself another Guinness into one of his soon-to-be-few-remaining-special-edition-Guinness mugs (another story entirely for another time but suffice to say it served him right, the pig-headed bastard).

Well, I wasn't keen, was I? If he didn't want to do a proper Greek myth with his bloody Bacchus, he knew what he could do with his crap song.

I relocated us to a two-bedroom suite at the Brisbane... Hilton (I think it was). If things got ugly, there was no need for the wife and kids to be caught in the crossfire of flying art materials or sharp splinters of soon-to-be-few-remaining-special-edition-Guinness mugs (it did, y'know, it served the pig-headed bastard right — and the crap plastic white kitchen chair as well).

Well, to make a long story short, he got his way (the pig-headed bastard). 'The Face on the Barroom Floor.' I even made Steve Bissette the heartbroken painter. If you're not ready to have a knock-down drag-out with the Scot who's in the room, it's a good idea to kick some Acadian-Living-in-Vermont fella who isn't there — just to, y'know, maintain your equilibrium.

Of course I had to get him back. It takes a bigger man than some pig-headed bastard to let a pig-headed bastard get his own way. But you *do* have to get him back or there's just no end to it, is there? No. There isn't (just ask any Scot).

So I talked him into self-publishing. That's not entirely true, which is where the 'getting him back' came into it. I didn't so much talk him into self-publishing as kick the spindly legs out from under all of the half-assed reasons he had for conducting his sorry excuse for a career in the way he did right up to the present day. The kicker was the day he was explaining that he doesn't like to have all his eggs in one basket, career-wise. He spreads his creativity over a number of publishing companies so that he isn't caught short when one of them goes tits up or is late paying the bills. 'Oh,' I said, sneering my best highland sneer, 'The Johnny Appleseed Theory.'

Well, Eddie cracked up. He couldn't stop laughing. So I got him back, see? Because he was being so serious about this crap theory of how to keep his head above water, and with one little sneer (one little sneer, mind) I had him laughing at what a stupid, half-baked, witless git he had been.

Of course, he got *me* back (when you're dealing with a stupid, half-baked, witless, pig-headed bastard, there really is no end to it) by actually deciding to self-publish. Now if he loses all his money, and his wife and kids starve to death, it'll be on my head because I'm the one who talked him into it (pig-headed bastard).

So, unfortunately, that puts you lot square in the middle, see? Because either *Bacchus* becomes a solid hit and enables Eddie and the wife and kids to keep on living and eating regular, in which case *I* win, or *Bacchus* sinks without a trace and Eddie and his wife and kids starve to death, in which case Eddie wins. Trust me — you'd all like Eddie much better than me if you ever met him, so in order to take his side, you have to not buy a great comic book and be responsible for his wife and kids starving to death.

Just remember, it's Eddie who's brought it to this. I was happy to let it rest after I kicked the spindly legs out from under his sorry excuse for a career.

Let it be on his head.

Eddie Campbell's
BACCHUS
I'm Campbell and that's Bacchus and this page is specially for this promo in Cerebus
That bloody Dave Sim talked us into self-publishing, so here comes a sampler of what we've got in store for you...
Here's my corporate identity. It took me a whole day to come up with this
EDDIE CAMPBELL COMICS T.M.

Eddie Campbell.
DAVE SIM
The Cerebus/Bacchus Crossover!! Created by Sim and Campbell over five days holed up in a posh hotel suite.
THEN.. a reprinting of the very first Bacchus story
over there

HEY, DEADFACE!
ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?
YEH, YOU, OLD MAN. WHAT'RE YOU IN FOR?
DRUNK AND DISORDERLY.
HA HA.. YOU LOOK OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW BETTER.
IS 4000 YEARS OLD ENOUGH?

4000 YEARS! JESUS CHRIST!
WHO?
THAT WAS JUST MY LITTLE JOKE
WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
BACCHUS, THE GOD OF REVELRY.
AREN'T YOU GODS SUPPOSED TO BE IMMORTAL?
VERY TRUE
THEN HOW COME YOU LOOK SO RUN DOWN?
TOO MUCH WINE, WOMEN AND SONG.
BACCHUS IS BACK
by
EDDIE CAMPBELL ©86

Okay now, that classic stuff continues, 24 pages each monthly issue at the back of the book, so to speak, and I know there must be at least a million of you out there that haven't already got it, not to mention the fact that I've reworked a lot of it too
BUT, running at the front of the book, from issue #2, 8 pages at a time, we have the BRAND NEW SERIAL and boy, I'm pouring EVERYTHING into this one. It's the TRAGIC HISTORY OF THE PUB THAT SECEDED FROM GREAT BRITAIN!!
Some really weird characters drink there. This story follows directly from the BACCHUS COLOR SPECIAL out from DARK HORSE in Apri(

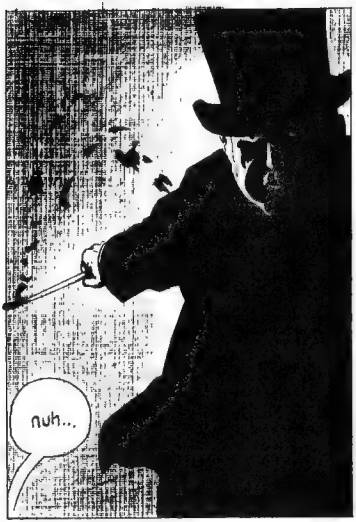
THREE DAYS STRAIGHT IN THIS PUB, BACCHUS! I'M STARTING TO GET THE SCREAMIN HEEBIE-JEEBIES
DON'T SAY THAT.

I THOUGHT WE DIDN'T HAVE A DANCE LICENSE HERE
WE ARE THE CASTLE AND FROG.. WE HAVE SECEDED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM!. DECLARED OURSELVES A SEPARATE AND SOVEREIGN NATION..
..WITH MYSELF, BACCHUS, AS THE REIGNING MONARCH
IT'S OUR PARTY, WE CAN DANCE IF WE WANT TO
IF WE'RE OUR OWN COUNTRY I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE OUR OWN NATIONAL DANCE.
Scuse me
Coming through
LET'S CALL IT THE FIRE HOSE REEL
Scuse
careful there
YEE HOO!
WE'RE ALL UP THE CREEK AND WE DON'T GIVE A SHIT
mind your arm

But, Mr. Campbell, will you be continuing your astonishing work on Alan Moore's FROM HELL?

It'll be bloody MURDER! HELP!

Uhhh...


nuh...

SPIRITS of INDEPENDENCE 1995

LOCAL LIAISONS:

APRIL 15, 1995
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Drew Hayes, *Poison Elves*
P.O. Box 5844
Bellingham, WA 98227-5844

JULY 1, 1995
MANCHESTER, VERMONT
Steve Bissette, *Tyrant*
P.O. Box 442
Wilmington, VT 05363

AUGUST 12, 1995
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS
Larry Marder,
Tales of the Beanworld
P.O. Box 664, Wilmette, IL 60091

SEPTEMBER 9, 1995
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
Don Simpson, *Bizarre Heroes*
P.O. Box 44326
Pittsburgh, PA 15205

OCTOBER 7, 1995
PHOENIX, ARIZONA
James Owen, *Starchild*
P.O. Box 40904
Mesa, AZ 85274

NOVEMBER 4, 1995
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
Richard Corben, *Den*
P.O. Box 8632
Kansas City, MO 64114

DECEMBER 3, 1995
KITCHENER, ONTARIO
Dave Sim, *Cerebus*
P.O. Box 1674, Station C
Kitchener, Ontario
CANADA
N2G 4R2

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$15 ea. U.S. funds
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Fax: (519) 576-0955

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

The following is a list of questions sent to me by J. Hagey, a freelance writer putting an article together on *Cerebus* 186 for *The Comics Journal* (an advertisement appears elsewhere in this issue — unless they missed the deadline — for those interested in ordering a copy from Fantagraphics). I'd like to thank Mr. Hagey for his permission to reprint his correspondence on the subject:

Questions

1. Including the letters appearing in your comic, what do you think of the response to the story/essay in issue 186? Has it met, or exceeded, what you were expecting?
2. What was the reason behind this story/essay, in particular the way it was written? It reads like a treatis (sic) or manifesto. It seems to beg some kind of answer. What is your world view that this essay is based on?
3. What role does 'Male Light' uniquely fulfill in the society? For the individual?
4. Who exactly do fall into the category of those having 'male light'?
5. Lastly, I wonder, then, if the "Wife and Kids" are the bane of male light, do we owe our fathers anything for what we, as his brood, inflicted on him and his life?

Hello, J. Hagey:

1. This presupposes that expectation is the foundation or, in some measure, a significant element in creativity. What do I think of the response? The world seems to be composed of people who are unable to separate what is factual from what is opinion. They find contrary opinions threatening in the extreme. It seems self-evident to me that if two people have widely differing views, then what is being discussed is not fact but opinion. I have been in receipt of a large pile of differing opinions, varying from the dispassionately reasoned to the hysterical. So what?

2. How typical. Condense my world view so that it fits into a neat little box of gray type in *The Comics Journal*. Anyone whose world view could be condensed in such a way is hardly worth considering. It is your opinion that it reads like a treatise or a manifesto. It is your opinion that it begs an answer. Why would that interest me?

3. Opinions would vary on what role the 'Male Light' fulfills in society, including whether it was a role, society itself, an aberration, an impediment, a platform, the fuel or the vehicle itself. I think I could argue each of these views with a degree of success. If we're going to talk about individuals, then we're going to have to talk about individuals. Of what individual are you speaking in soliciting my individual opinion? If you are speaking of 'the individual' in a collectivist sense, then you've missed the entirety of my point.

4. Again, opinions would vary. Individuals who represent 'male light' to me are individuals who represent 'male light' to me. Period. I can't understand why the specifics would be of interest to anyone but myself. The misapprehension seems to be that I am attempting to build a contrary consensus. In my opinion, consensus wherever it is perceived to exist is an illusion, and trafficking in the illusory holds no appeal for me. I paint what I see. I would wholeheartedly urge others to do the same.

****

I would suppose that very little of this would make it into the final article since it really doesn't fit the *Oprah* model required: let's gang up on the aberration and in doing so reinforce our self-righteous claim to our self-perceived normalcy. Assuming that you are genuinely interested in communication, I will supplement the above with a couple of observations which you can bury somewhere in the middle of the

piece, in the fine tradition of journalists everywhere.

'I draw a distinction between misogyny and the belief that feminism is an inherently positive force in society. I am very much in the minority in this. I find opinions contrary to my view to be long on sentiment and emotion and short on genuine thought.'

'*Reads* is the third part of the four-part *Mothers & Daughters* novel. The reaction to issue 186 is a tempest in a teapot focussing on twenty pages of a creative work one thousand pages in length, which is, in its turn, one sixth of the larger twenty-six-year project. This large project is of minimal interest to a minimal number of people in the comic-book field, itself the smallest medium of communication in the field of arts and/or entertainment. Until someone else is able to produce a work of comparable complexity and size, I fail to see why I should give any credence whatsoever to those who disapprove of me and my work. As Truman Capote once said, 'The dogs howl but the caravan rolls on.'

'I would ask people reading this article to examine carefully all of the attributed quotes. Do they constitute fact or opinion? If they are, at essence, merely contradictory opinions, then what has this article achieved? Are we not already aware that opinions, by their nature, contradict each other?'

****

Anyway, I intend to print your questions, my answers and the above quotes in a future issue of *Cerebus*, so what you choose to print (or, rather, what you choose NOT to print) should speak volumes about the nature of *The Comics Journal*.

Sincerely,

Dave Sim

★★★★★★★★★★

Hello, Dave Sim,

Thank you very much for your prompt response to my questions. Let me first say I would be delighted to have you print my questions and your answers in your comic. I will, however, have to invoice you for this; the company I work for is very strict. Being a contract writer, I have developed a very jealous nature to my work (as a fellow artist, I'm sure you fully understand), so I must keep constant watch on all my copyrighted words. It is quite common in writing to sell an article and any supplementary interviews (among which I count your replies to my answers) to other magazines and periodicals.

Since these questions are the result of a *Comics Journal* piece, I will only invoice you at the rate of two and a half cents a word for the piece. Please let me know if you wish to publish it; I would love to add *Cerebus* to my clippings list.

While the answers you gave me in your reply may seem sufficient, I am still left puzzled. I posed these questions not in the pursuit of fact or opinions, but in the pursuit of ideas. Many may argue that philosophy died, and rightly so, with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus.* Certainly the derivative bodies of Bertrand Russel's (sic) logical positivism and Sartre's existentialism are no more illuminating, and they did nothing to revive meta-physics (sic) (which is probably for the best).

But is it not in this realm of ideas, where fact and opinion do not exist, that you wish to speak? What value does an opinion warrant over that of an idea? No one would waste precious resources producing mere opinion. An artist's life is much too short to waste in such folly. How could the burning brilliance of male light waste time on pursuing opinions, except when discussing sporting events or women's hemlines, instead of presenting ideas? It is with this reverence that I have approached your work.

Yes, it may be true that *Reads* is only a smaller part of yet another smaller part of a great tome. But can it be that only the examination of the whole body of work is the only valid investigation of what the creator is saying? Can I understand nothing of Dickens by reading only one of his short stories? Nothing of Descartes by reading only one meditation? Of course I can. What would be the value of studying Ezra Pound in his entirety, from brilliant poetry to fascist rants? I would be muddled in paradoxes and contradictions of enormous proportions. The only value comes from the examination, and discussion, of each idea produced. It is with this modest position that I have read *Reads*.

I neither disapprove nor approve of ideas (surely you still don't think a male light such as yourself would bother printing only mere opinions), because ideas have no moral position. They just are. They exist solely for discussion and learning. Of course, this itself is just my opinion of what Plato's Socrates said.

Then again, the death of philosophy implies there is almost no reason to communicate novel ideas. I don't mean to defer constantly to ideas from other thinkers, but I always feel compelled to reveal my sources. I won't even bother mentioning Virginia Woolfe, Margaret Mead, Emma Goldman and Ayn Rand as inspirations of your current work. It would be pointless. There is hardly any logical reason to create anything these days, except to keep the pocketbook happy.

You may consider everything I've written here as public domain and print it at your leisure if you wish. This letter is written purely out of the thrill the free exchange of ideas brings.

If you wish to contact me about any of this, you can fax me at the same number.

J. Hagey

Hello, J.

Thank you. Very reassuring response on the issue of my reprinting your words in *Cerebus*. Very real possibility that this exchange might prove to be the last word on *Reads*, which would be something of a relief since the issues require contention to be brought into sharper focus and most of the communication I've had has run roughshod over my overarching thesis (something I am well used to and which is now more a source of amusement than frustration).

Here's where I think your argument misses the mark:

You are a proponent of thought as a structural system having more in common with, let us say, jurisprudence than art. The construction of law is an ongoing process consisting of minority and majority opinions. 'Many may argue that philosophy died, and rightly so, with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus.* Certainly the derivative bodies of Bertrand Russell's logical positivism and Sartre's existentialism are no more illuminating, and they did nothing to revive metaphysics (which is probably for the best).' I read this and the incandescent words to me are 'many', 'may', 'rightly, so', 'certainly', 'are', 'did nothing', 'is' and 'probably'. It certainly reveals to me what kind of wall you are building out of the materials at hand. This goes here. That goes there. Interesting.

Succinct. But opinion. Opinion on other people's thoughts to me are not thoughts. Perhaps what we are describing in our roundabout way is the distinction between scholarship and insight. It is possible that you see the two as related, judging by your words (my opinion).

***Cerebus* is not a body of work. *Cerebus* is a work. It is not the Collected Works of Charles Dickens, it is *A Tale of Two Cities*. There is a viewpoint that is being advanced in the work. If I could make my point in some condensed form — a magazine interview or a distillation volume — I would scarcely have devoted seventeen years of my life (and nine more to go) to pumping the simpler view full of hot air to create the illusion of mass.**

You can mention the names that you have as 'inspirations' for my work. This is an error of scholarship — the assumption that others' ideas are the building blocks from which a creative work is constructed. Scholars are always stopped dead in their tracks by the denial of influence. How can such a thing be? The ideas presented have so much in common with the influence, it simply isn't POSSIBLE that there is no direct cause and effect. I am put in mind of Larry Marder as a fan-boy tad, much enamoured and well read on the subject of the Hopi Indians — a Hopi fanatic — who saw whole pieces of the big Hopi cloth writ large — nay, gargantuan — in Kirby's Fourth World series. When the opportunity presented itself at a comic-book convention to inquire about this, Kirby proved to be completely unwitting of anything having to do with the Hopi Indians. Fortunately Larry was and is a creative individual, so the answer did not bring any ersatz-scholar castle crashing to ruins, but instead fed his reverence, delight and satisfaction with the Funny Way These Things Are (you see? Not being scholars, we have no words for this. It just Is).

Out of your list, I have read *The Fountainhead* by Ayn Rand. Curiosity finally overcame me — so many earnest individuals had insisted that I must be a major Rand fan (MUST be). When I assured them that this was not the case, to a one they were insistent that I MUST read Rand's work. If my castle was not built on their foundation, at least a kind of after-the-fact, closing-the-barn-door cause and effect could be hoped for.

Your world and my world are diametrically opposed. You don't accept this. Well and good. I am documenting the Funny Way These Things Are. In the course of my reading I find many of my same views and the views which are in opposition to them. If I had a nickel for every classical theme, universal myth, philosophy and icon which has been hitched to *Cerebus* in the minds of its readers, I would have many, many nickels.

I have yet to read anything about Ayn Rand and *The Fountainhead* that has anything to do with the book I read. I have only infrequently read anything about myself or *Cerebus* that has anything to do with the work I am writing. Scholarship about creativity is important only to scholars. Analysis is important only to analysts. Criticism is important only to critics. You attempt to label and classify that which is important because it cannot be successfully labeled and cannot be successfully classified. Because the goal of scholarship is to 'get on top of things' — the largest possible overview — it is not difficult to see why the *Tractatus* has dropped you off a metaphorical cliff. To be sure, reading between the lines of your building blocks, the only conclusion you can come to is that the only logical reason to create anything these days is to keep the pocketbook happy. A happy pocketbook is an implication of creativity having little or (in my case) nothing to do with what I do and why I do it. I am pointing at something you are evidently unable to see. This does not make me uncomfortable. You are asking me to play football on an ice rink. You don't play football on an ice rink. You play hockey on an ice rink. You play football on a football field. The fact that football would be an entirely different and largely inadequate game when played on an ice rink does not accurately reflect any fundamental flaw in the game of football. I am sure your ice rink is good for something, if only the personal satisfaction you derive from it. I think you would be well served to content yourself with that.

I hope this brings you a little closer to understanding.

Sincerely,

Dave Sim

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear J.

In getting together our correspondence for inclusion in *Cerebus* 192, I noticed, to my chagrin, that I hadn't answered your original question 5. I'm sure I'm too late for your article, but for the record:

5. It would be easy to just say that this, too, is up to the individual. It scratches a larger surface in my own case and, at the risk of muddying the water by injecting my own views, it seems to come down to an issue of 'Honour thy father and thy mother'. This is not an edict to be taken lightly. Is the decision of the late-twentieth-century individual to interpret this a different way (i.e., the best way to honour my mother and my father is to make myself into the best possible person according to my own perceptions of who that is — to be true to myself, whatever the resistance and consequences implied by that) from the traditional view (i.e., you're too busy to come over for Sunday dinner, Mr. Big Shot? You can't pick up a phone?) a self-serving rationalisation? Not being a father, all I can do is go by the 'party' line that seems nearly universal in parental circles: as long as it makes him happy and he's not hurting anybody, more power to him. I think unhappy children make parents unhappier than do happy children. I'm a very happy child. I just hope that's good enough.

Best,

Dave Sim

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Mr. Sim,

As an artist who is currently setting up my own publishing venture, I have needed the advice of people such as yourself and I've been doing my homework. I've read your Notes From The President, articles on self-publishing, interviews with other self-publishers such as Jeff Smith, and many other articles and the like.

The one area I have failed to read anything about, though, is taxes. Not income tax, but GST and PST. This thought especially crossed my mind since, if, as I hope, in the near future my book will gain a fan base and people want back issues, how do you deal with those darn taxes? Whom do you charge what to? Do out-of-the-country customers pay GST, for example? Or, for that matter, do distributors pay these

taxes? Since you are involved in the business on a day-to-day basis, I thought your firsthand knowledge would be far more valuable than pamphlets and booklets. In other words, I need practical advice.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Chad Alberico
118 Neal Avenue
Stratford, ON
N5A 5A8

The best advice when it comes to self-publishing (the technical side you're talking about) is to do the research. Phone the tax offices involved and ask. Likewise with tax and license laws in your community. If the answer isn't in the brochure or pamphlet, find the part that seems to apply to you (as closely as possible) and phone with a specific question. Oh, and don't phone about a general question like this during tax time. They really hate that.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

As you say, maybe we should turn away from *Reads* and move on to your next (and already intriguing) story. But... there's always a temptation to go for another bite of the cherry. And I haven't seen the "This correspondence is now closed" sign yet. Besides, I've got something of Hemingway's to give you.

First of all, I knew Victor would get around to colonising the letters page eventually. OK, so he had to use a mouthpiece, but that's always the writer's lot. There is a temptation to overplay the role of the letters page in *Cerebus* (self-importance, of course) and it's fun to see you play about with the margins and borders (does Scott McCloud know about this?).

I suppose I come amongst the relentlessly cheerful co-conspirators. Sorry. I tried being relentlessly moody, but it just didn't suit me. I was cynical for a while, but I've seen through that now. I couldn't see the point of nihilism, and I'll always drink to hedonism. Anyway, where was I? Oh, yeah, "We're talking about percentages". A good place to build a bridge. There are a lot of smothering, overly control-biased women. And there are a lot of dependent, snivelling males. You know what a bell curve looks like and that we all fit in somewhere. It seemed to me that you were generalising about all women and all men, and I just hate all generalisations (well, maybe not all of them). On re-reading my last letter I see that I gave you advice on not getting married. Sorry, that was presumptuous and ill-informed. And a few years late.

OK, those're enough bites, even for a pretty big cherry. Here, as promised, Hemingway's "Valentine — for a Mr. Lee Wilson Dodd and Any of His Friends Who Want It", written after Dodd's bad review of *Men Without Women:*

Sing a song of critics
pockets full of lye
four and twenty critics
hope that you will die
hope that you will peter out
hope that you can fail
so they can be the first one
be the first to hail
any happy weakening or
sign of quick decay...
If you do not like them lads
one thing you can do
stick them up your asses lads
My Valentine to you.

(Yes, I know it's petty. But it's fun, too.)

Until 200 (oh, that was a joke, wasn't it?).

Michael Mooney
26 Stokesley Grove
High Heaton
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE7 7AU

Whether it was presumptuous or ill-informed, I'm a big boy, Michael. I can take it. I've found, since I relayed the 'we're arguing about percentages' sound bite, that it's the perfect way to 'shorthand' a conversation. When someone says 'most men are...' or 'most blacks are...' or whatever, I ask them to attach a percentage to it. Then I give them my percentage. Then I ask (if the variance is very wide: 80% versus 10%, let's say) if they think it is really worth continuing to discuss the topic, seeing as how we're very far apart in our perceptions, and anecdotal evidence is useless, and our perception of our possible margin for error isn't very wide. Try it sometime. It's a lot of fun.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

It's the wee hours of the morning again and I'm writing another letter.

One week and a day ago I picked up #189 and read the preview of *THB*. I had been hearing enough about Paul Pope to motivate me to look for something of his. When I saw the preview, I thought, "What a strong recommendation" and "How can I possibly resist learning the outcome of the attack of the roboticized Steinway?" Well, the next day I was at Golden Apple in LA to meet Neil Gaiman and have him sign some stuff, but the nice people at the store (in an attempt to squeeze every possible dollar out of the event) informed me that, to get into the "priority" line, I had to buy something. I decided to oblige them and save myself some time, so I wandered into the store and came across *THB*. Ah, serendipity. What can I say; you were right. It really is quite good. In fact, I think it's the best thing in the preview since *Exit*.

And now some other (extremely minor) business. In #... where is it... tee-hee, Mrs. Tynsdale-Clyde demonstrating the size of Cerebus' "fifth appendage"... 36 (?), Theresa tells Weisshaupt that Sir Gerrik is Cirin's adopted son. However, in *Reads* (I'm not sure which issue; it's in Albuquerque), Astoria explains to Cerebus and the others that Cirin's natural-born son, presumably the same Sir Gerrik, was not the aardvark Cirin had hoped for. Is this: a) a mistake/misinformation on Theresa's part/misinformation by Astoria; b) an error on your part (doubtful); c) a seeming contradiction to be resolved later; d) a seeming contradiction which, like so many in life, cannot be resolved; e) none of the above; f) "Go away, son. You bother me"? On the other hand, if Gerrik is Cirin's own child, his coupling with Astoria, and the fetus produced thereby, could have been an early attempt by Cirin and/or Astoria to produce another aardvark. If Po had not revealed that Astoria had miscarried, and it was possible that she had aborted the fetus (which, of course, it still is), she could have done it either because she was afraid it would be another aardvark (if Gerrik is Cirin's son) or because she was afraid it would not be (because Gerrik is adopted). But if they went back in time and killed the Professor before he formed the X... oh, whatever.

On another topic... I recently bought *Cerebus Companion #2* and, because of one of the interviews, began to understand just how much you differentiate between matriarchists and feminists. In my last letter, I tended to refer to them both as feminists, mostly because I was thinking of them in terms of the "feminizing" effect on values that I believe they have had,

regardless of specific policy differences between the two. I hope that that did not cause confusion or lead to the belief that I failed to understand your position in general.

Anyway. A matter of percentages, is it? Perhaps so. However, as I argued, I think we are dealing with a much larger phenomenon here, and I would be happy to discuss it and some other topics whenever the chance arises. Thanks for the advertisement for the '95 World Tour. I saw #188 the day before I got on a plane and had quite a wonderful laugh seeing Cerebus trapped in the same situation in which I usually find myself when flying. All children should be relegated, like pets, to the luggage compartment. So let it be written: so let it be done.

Since I've been re-re-re-reading *The Birth of Tragedy*, one phrase has been going through my head, so I thought I would share it. "The existence of the world can be justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon." Something to chew on with X-mas dinner.

Happy holidays.

TTEN
Sky Woodruff
Destroyer of Right Margins
2161 Jamestown Way
Oxnard, CA
USA 93035

P.S. No postscript this time.

P.P.S. Damn. Maybe next time.

P.P.P.S. I also just got a copy of *AV in 3-D*. Again with the ear, huh? Except that this time it was the left. Hmm.

I should be getting to the Gerrik stuff in the next few months — unless it fits better somewhere else, in which case I'll get to it then. But I think it's in the next month or so. What percentage of the population do you suppose thinks that babies should be banned from aircraft in the same way smoking is? Ask around. Isn't this fun?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I hope this holiday season finds you well. Also, thanks for sending me a copy of my own press release (it was my most surreal moment of 1994).

Anyway, I know it's not quite 1995 but I do have an idea for a new project. (One which involves much less time and cost than '40 and 5'.) For some time I've been planning to do a column called "Adopting a Comic." The idea being for small-store owners to find one title they feel strongly about and "adopting" that title. This would mean creating displays, playing it up in their store publications, making sure they keep back issues in stock and, most important of all, promoting the book directly to their customers. While there is obviously the hope that this will result in profit for the store, it's more important that it will help establish store identity. Thus a store can become "the" store for *Very Vicky*, or *Hairbat*, or whatever. (Earlier this year I had a guy who works for an Atlanta retailer come all the way to my store to get back issues of *Poison Elves*.)

From this I came up with the concept of what I'm calling "adoption packages." The idea here is to offer through the distributors a prepack of back issues and promotional items for stores that want to adopt a title. For example a sample pack might cost $50 net and include $100 (retail) in back issues, a promotional poster, and an 8.5" x 11" flyer which includes space for the store name and could be reproduced as a handout (or perhaps even as an ad). Finally, I think each pack should include some sort of certificate which would be returned to the publisher for a personalized display item. (For example, both Teri Wood and the *Strange Attractors* guys have sent me personalized promotional posters.) This would serve two purposes. First, it gives retailers something which shows their special link to the publisher. Second, it gets the retailer's name and address to publishers so they know which stores to target for special promotions or events. (Or to even thank the retailer in the pages of their books.) Of course, each publisher could come up with other goodies appropriate to its books. (Paper hats from Don Simpson, *Too Much Coffee Man* postcards from Shannon Wheeler, or perhaps a T-shirt from Steve Bissette.)

The bottom line of all this is to go even beyond '40 and 5' to help out the retailer who wants to support a given book. Best of all, it helps those retailers who can't make it to distributor shows to establish the "direct link" with publishers. (It also involves the distributors, which may smooth a few ruffled feathers. I talked this over with Mark Herr at Diamond and he liked the idea. He even said that if enough publishers tried it, they might create a special designation in the retailer edition of *Previews*.)

So I'm hoping this is an idea you might want to run by some others or, perhaps, use in a Note From The President. Unlike '40 and 5', I think publishers should contact distributors directly about this. (I also think trying to keep the cost around $50 net would be a good idea.)

I, of course, will be covering this in my column, but I'm going to be taking two months for "Cheers and Jeers" (it was that kind of year) so it won't see print until April 1995. That's why I'd like to get the idea out and about before then.

If you have any questions or comments you can still fax me at 706-549-3138 (or leave a message at 706-548-0943).

Once again, thanks for your help and best wishes for the holiday season.

Sincerely,

Preston A. Sweet, Owner
Main Street Comics
2351 College Station Road
Suite 447
Athens, Georgia
USA 30605

P.S. I've enclosed a photograph of my *Wandering Star* shrine which includes promotional posters, reviews, letters, photos, interviews, postcards, and even an unused page of original art. Ideally every store owner can find one title they want to give this level of support.

Hope it's okay that I just went ahead and printed your letter, Preston, because I think this is a sensational idea — particularly with Eddie Campbell and B.C. Boyer and all the other guys needing just this kind of support. I hope a lot of stores will give it a try and write in with the results.

★★★★★★★★★★

1996
CEREBUS
WORLD
TOUR

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FRANCE • ENGLAND
GERMANY • AUSTRALIA
AND MORE

Neil Gaiman

The Guardian Angel Tour

A BENEFIT FOR THE

Comic Book Legal Defense Fund

APRIL 9, 1995 2-5 PM

ACADEMY OF MUSIC OPERA HOUSE

274 MAIN STREET NORTHAMPTON MASSACHUSETTS

SPECIAL GUEST

Dave Sim, creator of Cerebus

On Sunday, April 9, 1995,
Neil Gaiman
(Mr. Punch, Sandman)
will continue
The Guardian Angel Tour
with dramatic and eloquent
readings from
Angels and Visitations
as well as other stories as part
of his ongoing commitment to
raise money and awareness for
the fight against censorship for
the comics industry.

All proceeds from this event
will benefit the Comic Book
Legal Defense Fund.
a non-profit organization
funding the legal support of
Comic Book professionals that
are forced to defend their first
amendment rights in the courts.

An Artist Reception
will follow the reading at
Words & Pictures Museum.
Daydreams & Nightmares,
an exhibit of original
Dave McKean illustrations
of Neil's work will be extended
through this event.

Limited tickets available.
For information please contact:

CBLDF
Northampton MA
413 586 6967 or
800 992 2333

Words & Pictures Museum
140 Main Street
Northampton Ma.
413 586 8345

ARTWORK BY MICHAEL ZULLI

FAX

FOR: Dave Sim
PAGE 1 OF 2
DATE: 1/19/95

Dear Dave,

RADICAL DREAMER is now published by my own imprint, **Mark's Giant Economy Size Comics!** We will re-solicit issue #-1 in February for June release. BLACKBALL COMICS did a fine job, but we just couldn't fight the announcements that we had gone out of business that keep appearing in the press. So, from now on **Mark's Giant Economy Size Comics!** will be the one-stop source for all **RADICAL DREAMER** issues.

In print and available are **RADICAL DREAMER** #0, #1, #2 at $2.75 each. Issues #3 & #4 available for $3.25 each. These prices include postage and handling. An order will put you on our mailing list for my free ***RADICAL DREAMERS NEWSLETTER.***

RADICAL DREAMER
Mark's Giant Economy Size Comics!
7844 Saint Thomas Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21236

I support the 40 and 5 reorder plan for retailers. My phone number is (410) 661 6897

Thanks again for all your help.

HAVE FUN!

BULLETINS...10 FEBRUARY 95...BULLETINS...10 FEBRUARY A.P.E. II RESCHEDULED TO ORIGINAL DATE: 14 MAY REPEAT 14 MAY 95 NOT 13 MAY AS INDICATED ON BACK COVER OF WORLD TOUR BOOK...A.P.E. II SAN JOSE DETAILS CALL 800-866-8929...MARVELUTION FIZZLES ON LAUNCH PAD MARVEL RENEWS STATUS QUO UNTIL AT LEAST SEPTEMBER 95 TRADE TERMS AND SOLICITATIONS FOR MAY RELEASE BY MARVEL UNCHANGED...DIAMOND EXECS AND DC HOLD CLOSED-DOOR MEETING 1 FEB 95 NO ANNOUNCEMENT...BETHESDA MD SMALL PRESS EXPO WILL DONATE 10 DOLLAR ADMISSION CHARGE TO CBLDF...SHOOTING STAR 'SOLIDARITY SIGNING' HUGE SUCCESS FEATURING BROS HERNANDEZ FRANK MILLER HOWARD CHAYKIN AND OTHERS...BETHESDA SMALL PRESS EXPO DETAILS JON COHEN 301-840-0520...RECOMMENDED: SHADES OF GRAY GN 120 PGS JIM GOWNLEY LADY LUCK PRESS 219 A STREET GIRADVILLE PA 17935...EINSTEIN'S COMICS (JAMES ECHOLS) 1540 NORTHWEST HWY GARLAND TX 75041 PURCHASES DISPLAY BLOCK AT 95 SAN DIEGO COMIC CON TO SHOWCASE SELF-PUBLISHERS AND SMALL PRESS CREATORS & BOOKS IN MOVE TO THWART STATUS QUO SDCC 'GHETTOIZATION' OF NON-MAINSTREAM 214-270-7878 FOR DETAILS...COLD CUT DIST 5704 CALMOR AVE #1 SAN JOSE CALIF 95123 408-229-0930 CONTINUES TO GET RAVE REVIEWS FROM RETAILERS LIMITING THE NUMBER OF TITLES CARRIED FOR MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY...GREYMATTER HITS ISSUE 7 ORDERS BEGIN TO CLIMB ALAFFINITY PUBS PO BOX 272064 CONCORD CA 94527-2064...RECOMMENDED: JEFF JOHNSON'S NURTURE THE DEVIL FIRST THREE ISSUES AVAILABLE FROM FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS 7563 LAKE CITY WAY NE SEATTLE WA 9815 2.50 EA USA 2.95 EA CAN... DAVE SIM INTRODUCES NEIL GAIMAN READING MUSIC ACADEMY NORTHAMPTON MA 9 APRIL 'GUARDIAN ANGEL TOUR' TO BEN-EFIT THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND (SEE AD THIS ISSUE) BULLETINS...10 FEBRUARY 95...BULLETINS...10

SPIRITS of INDEPENDENCE

DIRECTIONS—

WEST: Take I-90 to I-5 North. Exit at Madison, go two blocks, turn left at Seneca.

NORTH: Exit I-5 at Seneca Street.

SOUTH: Exit I-5 at Union Street. Following Fifth Avenue and turn left. Follow to Spring Street and turn left. Then left at Sixth.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

This time, Ger managed to hang onto the brochure that we used for the back cover photo, so the map should be a little bit better. The local liaison is:

Drew Hayes
MULEHIDE GRAPHICS
P.O. Box 5844, Bellingham, Washington 98277-5844
(206) 671-5212

By the time you read this, word should be out that Drew has chosen to join Sirius Publishing with his *Poison Elves* title. Although I had hoped to make all of the local liaisons self-publishers, there is no doubt that Drew 'paid his dues' through a very rough couple of years and, while I don't agree with his reasons for signing on with a publisher, every creator has to use his own best judgement in choosing how to publish and distribute his work. I wish him well and look forward to seeing him.

The Retailer du Jour is Perry Plush of ZANADU COMICS who is a long-time veteran of this nutty business — way back to the Phil Seuling versus Hal Schuster days. Once again, he will be putting together two or three tables of self-published, small press and mini-comic material as well as an assortment of 'cutting edge' mainstream material. The decision of the judge is final and that's Perry so you can pitch him on carrying your work by sending samples to:

Perry Plush
ZANADU COMICS
1923 3rd Avenue, Seattle, Washington
(206) 443-1316

And once again self-publishers and the small press are invited to send flyers to Perry and we'll have them at the admissions table for easy picking. Perry will also be providing the admissions table staff. Again, very much appreciated.

On the subject of lower priced accommodations, Drew was kind enough to provide me with a little touristy booklet with the following reasonably priced hotels in the downtown area:

Best Western Executive Inn
200 Taylor Ave. North
Seattle, WA 98109
(206) 448-9444

Hotel Seattle
315 Seneca Street
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 623-5110

Ramada Inn Downtown
2200 Fifth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98121
(206) 448-9024

★★★★★★★★★★

Once again, in the interest of Keep It Simple, Stupid, we will just be heading down to whatever seems like the most appropriate lobby bar or sports bar around 8:00. Not to put too fine a point on it, but we all really SHOULD buy a few drinks and snacks and such to keep the staff and management people happy. Jam sketches and general hilarity should be the order of the day.

★★★★★★★★★★

As this is being written (February 8) there are still a few tables left and a DISTINCT race to see whether there will be more American or C*A*N*A*D*I*A*N creators exhibiting. Colin Upton promises a more robust performance contribution on 'O, Canada' than at the Seattle stop on the U.S. Tour in '92 — more along the lines of our impromptu duet at the post A.P.E. party last year in San Jose. Tables are fifteen dollars each, cheque or money order payable to:

Aardvark Vanaheim Inc.
P.O. Box 1674, Station C
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
N2G 4R2
FAX: (519) 576-0955

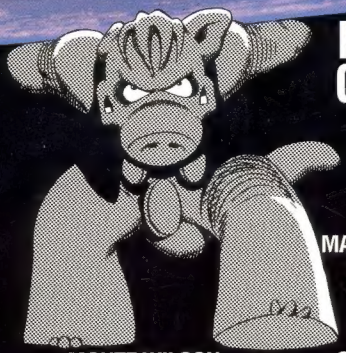
Likewise for booking tables when the SPIRITS OF INDEPENDENCE events resume on July 1st in Manchester, Vermont… August 12: Chicago, Illinois… September 9: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania… November 4: Kansas City, Missouri… December 3 (please note changed date): Kitchener, Ontario.

SEATTLE
WASHINGTON
APRIL 15, 1995
10am to 5:30pm

DAVE SIM & GERHARD

DREW HAYES
POISON ELVES

DONNA BARR
DESERT PEACH



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COLIN UPTON
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(present business card at admissions table)

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more information on inside back cover